**[Afghanistan: Once Again, We're Marching Into an Unwinnable War](http://www.ihavenet.com/Afghanistan-Troop-Surge-Once-Again-Marching-Into-an-Unwinnable-War-Joe-Galloway.html" \o "Afghanistan: Once Again, We're Marching Into an Unwinnable War | Joe Galloway)**   
**Joe Galloway**

**Afghanistan Troop Surge (c) Paul Tong** 

Wet snow blankets the Military Academy Cemetery deep enough to discourage my usual trooping of the long, sorrowful line of headstones of those graduates who died in Vietnam.

They're in line along the back fence, these young men of the Classes of 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967 and on and on and on. They were lieutenants and captains and even a few majors. They did their duty. They followed the orders of Kennedy or Johnson or Nixon or even Gerald Ford.

They fought and died for duty, honor and country, as have so many others of the long gray line who rest here or in Arlington or in other national cemeteries across this land.

The sheer numbers of their marble markers along that back fence, the length of that line to be trooped and reviewed, never fails to bring me to tears -- hot, bitter tears at the sacrifice they made so willingly for a war so wrong, so futile.

President Obama came to West Point and with the 4,000 cadets of this institution as his backdrop announced he was escalating the war in Afghanistan, adding an additional 30,000 American troops to the nearly 70,000 already there.

Then he jetted off to collect the Nobel Peace Prize. Lord help us. I would blush for him and for us, if it weren't for the precedent. A Peace Prize for a leader who escalated a war? Ah well, remember? They gave the same prize to Henry Kissinger, so peaceful a leader that he bears responsibility for the butchering of 2 or 3 or maybe 4 million human beings in Cambodia and Vietnam and Laos.

The new president promised that after 18 months we would begin withdrawing those additional troops. Maybe. Or, if you listen to the words of his civilian and military advisers, maybe not. More likely not. Meantime, the president of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, says his army will require our money, weapons and support until 2026 or thereabouts.

So the war that should have ended in 2003 will only grow larger, deadlier and more costly as 2010 dawns.

Once again we find ourselves wading into the quicksand of a war in the wrong place, against the wrong enemy, with the wrong locals as our putative allies, and no hope in hell of even defining what victory would be in that place, much less winning such a victory.

This is what happens when a politician sets out to reach a compromise instead of a right decision. He can chew it over for three months and listen to every possible argument pro and con, but in the end he is going to cut the baby in half and call it a compromise.

So now the eight-year war will drag on without end and the number of fresh marble markers in the West Point Cemetery will grow. We have sown the seeds of war and we will reap a harvest of tombstones and grief.

The new president was right to choose West Point as the venue for his speech. But it would have been better if he'd chosen to deliver it in the cemetery instead of Eisenhower Hall.

Just as Lyndon B. Johnson's decision to escalate and Americanize the Vietnam War blighted and ultimately destroyed his presidency, so too will Afghanistan and that other war he inherited blight the presidency of Barack Obama.

Obama arrived with so many hopes for repair and reform riding on his shoulders. But it would have required a huge dose of moral courage to deliver on those hopes and all those promises, and that one thing -- moral courage -- seems strangely lacking in this president.

On the way into the West Point Cemetery, on the way to the back fence, I always pass by the large ornate monument that marks the final resting place of Col.George Armstrong Custer and I stop. I render him a solemn salute from someone who also stood with the 7th U.S. Cavalry in a desperate river valley battle. Then I speak aloud to Custer, the Boy General: "Sir, you were an arrogant, ignorant idiot and you got everybody killed."

Online Breaking News Headlines Single Source to Headlines Breaking News Current Events Top Stories. Find out what is happening in News & the World. Check out iHaveNet.com for the latest news & current events articles plus Movie Reviews, Wolfgang Puck Recipes, NFL Previews Analysis and Politics. Your Single Source to News Articles, Current Events & Reviews.There are a few military commanders today more adept at boxing in a greenhorn president and playing politics to prolong an unwinnable war than they are at getting on with their job. They might do well to reflect on the lessons taught by Col. Custer.

Source blog

Tasks:

1. What is the long black fence that is referred to in the first few chapters with names of the dead. Get a picture of it in Black and white and stick it in your books with a caption saying what is is and where it is.
2. Try and summarise what the writer of this blog is saying in a paragraph?
3. Critically analyse the value of this blog as a source of information. (can it be trusted, how true is it, is it opinion or fact?)
4. Research and find any blogs or articles that say that the war in Afghanistan is winnable. Print it out, stick it in your books and also write a paragraph to simplify what it is saying.